

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD  
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS  
JUNE 1, 2021**

**ITEM 7**

**SUBJECT**

UPDATE ON WATER UNAVAILABILITY METHODOLOGY FOR THE DELTA WATERSHED

**DISCUSSION**

Staff from the Division of Water Rights (Division) will present an update on the development of the Water Unavailability Methodology for the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta (Delta) Watershed (Water Unavailability Methodology) and associated status on issuance of notices of water unavailability. The Water Unavailability Methodology compares the best available supply and demand data throughout the Delta watershed to determine water unavailability for the purpose of informing diverters when there is an insufficient supply to meet their priority of right. The Water Unavailability Methodology has a similar underlying foundation as the methodology used by the Division in 2014 and 2015, with improvements based on lessons-learned and feedback received both during and after the previous drought.

On March 22, 2021, the Division issued a letter to all water right holders or claimants in the state, providing an update on the dry hydrologic conditions and the potential for water shortages during the upcoming dry season. Hydrologic conditions have worsened since the issuance of the Division's letter, resulting in current and expected water unavailability for nearly all post-1914 appropriative water right holders in the Delta watershed. Due to these conditions, the Division plans on sending notices of water unavailability based on the Water Unavailability Methodology in the near future.

On May 12, 2021, the Division released the Draft Water Unavailability Methodology for public review and comment, consisting of: 1) an interactive graphing tool that displays supply and demand data; 2) a spreadsheet displaying the data inputs used for analysis; 3) a staff summary report outlining the methods used to develop the tool and describing the data sources, assumptions, and the bases for the assumptions used to develop the methodology; and 4) technical appendices to the summary report that describe the methodology and data process to assess supply and demand conditions in greater detail. On May 21, 2021, Division staff hosted a public workshop to solicit public and stakeholder feedback and provide additional technical context and background for the Water Unavailability Methodology and related resources. Division staff have been in the process of reviewing written and oral public comments to inform refinements to the methodology as appropriate. Refinements to the methodology will also continue into the future if warranted.

**POLICY ISSUE**

None. This is an informational item.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

None. This is an informational item.

**REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT**

None. This is an informational item.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

None. This is an informational item.